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THE URBAN NEGRO FAMILY.

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IN TRACING THE MOVEMENT OF THE NEGRO FAMILY TOWARD A MIDDLE-CLASS ORIENTATION AND TOWARD URBANIZATION, THIS ARTICLE NOTES THAT THE PATTERN IS BECOMING SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE GENERAL AMERICAN FAMILY. NEGROES HAVE LEFT THEIR SOUTHERN RURAL FARMS FOR BOTH SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN URBAN AREAS AND HAVE TENDED TO SETTLE IN THE INNER CORE OF THE LARGEST CITIES. IN THIS CONTEXT OF URBANIZATION THE ARTICLE DISCUSSES THE POPULATION CONCENTRATION, FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS, AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE NEGRO FAMILY. IT ALSO DESCRIBES EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS, INCOME, AND HOUSING PROBLEMS, AND REVIEWS SUCH SOCIAL ISSUES AS MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY, POVERTY, OLD AGE, AND THE ACCOMPANYING DEPENDENCE ON WELFARE ASSISTANCE. ONE SECTION OF THE ARTICLE OUTLINES THE WHOLE CONSTELLATION OF PROBLEMS DERIVED FROM THE DEVALUED RACIAL STATUS OF THE NEGRO--LOW SELF ESTEEM, DISRUPTED FAMILIES, BREAKDOWN OF STABLE RURAL TRADITIONS, AND SOCIALLY DEVIANT BEHAVIOR. IT CONCLUDES THAT, HOPEFULLY, THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION WILL ENABLE THE NEGRO TO ACCULTURATE AND INTEGRATE INTO THE AMERICAN MAINSTREAM AS HAVE OTHER ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE PAST. A BIBLIOGRAPHY ACCOMPANIES THIS ARTICLE. THIS ARTICLE IS PUBLISHED IN THE AMERICAN NEGRO REFERENCE BOOK. ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J., PRENTICE-HALL, C1966. P.337-359. (NH)

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chapter 6

The Urban Negro Family

Joseph H. Douglass

Introduction *

Today, as a result of large-scale urbanization, the Negro family [1] in the United States is in the process of transition. In their earliest experiences in the United States, Negroes were concentrated in rural areas, placed in the lowest rungs of the socio-economic ladder, rendering service as slaves or indentured servants. Over the years, however, the Negro family has come increasingly to approximate general American family patterns, becoming more urban and less identified with agricultural pursuits or with non-urban jobs in sawmills, turpentine plants and the like.

Growth and mobility have been characteristic of the population of the United States in general and of the Negro group in particular. For the past two decades the Negro population has been increasing at a significantly faster rate than has the white. The 1960 census showed nearly 20.5 million nonwhites in the United States. As of 1962 Negroes constituted approximately 12 percent of the total population.[2] Six states now have a Negro population in excess of one million. Outside the Deep South, the Negro population has increased fivefold since 1910, nearly tripling since 1940. Part of this expansion has come from natural increase and part from the movement of Negroes from the South to other regions.

* The author wishes to acknowledge with grateful appreciation the assistance of his friend and colleague, Dr. Israel Light, in the preparation of this paper.

[1] The family, as such, hardly existed for Negroes during at least two-thirds of their history in this country; and matriarchal aspects of family organization, which are so prominent in Negro families, were largely an outgrowth of the institution of slavery. The slave had no property rights, no rights as a human being before the law, no legal recognition of marriage, no recognition of lineage. The only group tradition was that of bondage. Roots of the Negro family have been grounded in a strong maternal affiliation because it was the mother who provided such nurturing of the young as was possible in a slave society. Vestigial evidence of this matriarchal form continues to the present day.

[2] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Trends*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963 edition) p. 27.

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Fifty years ago approximately three-fourths of the Negro population lived in areas classified as rural; now the order is reversed.[3] Now three out of four Negro families live in the city.

Negroes have not only left the South; they have left the farms also. The heaviest movements between 1950 and 1960 were out of the states of Mississippi, Alabama and South Carolina and into the urban centers in California, New York, and Illinois.[4] Within the South itself Negroes have been moving to the cities; apparently the city, no matter where it is, is believed to hold greater opportunities.

In the decade 1950–60 there were dramatic shifts in the color composition of the population in metropolitan areas. In each of the fifty largest cities in conterminous United States there were higher proportions of Negroes in 1960 than ten years earlier.

Although all of the country's largest cities had a higher proportion of nonwhites in 1960 than in 1950, the reasons for this distribution varied. In each of the largest Northeastern cities, and in all but two of the largest sixteen cities in the North Central region, the changing balance between color groups was due to losses in the number of whites. The outward flow of whites and the influx of nonwhites to these cities represented a sharpening of a trend which had been in process for a considerable period. In thirteen of the fifty largest cities, however, both whites and nonwhites increased in absolute numbers; in these cities the rise in the proportion of nonwhites reflected both a more rapid natural increase as compared to whites as well as in-migration of nonwhites.*

The experience of the South is in sharp contrast to that of the other regions, as over six out of every ten Southern metropolitan areas showed lower proportions of nonwhites in 1960 than in the previous ten years. These Southern communities have become progressively more "white" during the last decade.

Central City Concentration of Negro Population

Negro families in urban areas have gravitated into the "core" or "central city." In 1960 some 10.3 million, or slightly more than half the nonwhite population, lived in central city—a gain of 63 percent over 1950. In the

[3] Tobia Bressler, "Some Population Trends Involving and Affecting the Negro—Implications." Address, Association of Social Science Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, March 22, 1962.

[4] U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, *Our Nonwhite Population and its Housing: The Changes Between 1950 and 1960,* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, July, 1963).

* For an extended discussion of this point see Karl and Alma Taeuber, "The Negro Population in the United States," earlier in this volume.

nation's 212 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas 78 percent of nonwhites lived in the central cities, with only 22 percent in the suburbs; 52 percent of whites lived outside of the central cities. Only in the South do more whites live in central cities than in the suburbs.

The increased urbanization of Negro families has not extended to the suburbs. Only one in five Negroes in the Standard Metropolitan Areas in the United States live in the suburbs. In contrast one half of the whites live in the suburbs.

White families as they have become affluent have looked to the suburbs as an area where they can achieve what to them represents the highest living standards America offers. Some Negro families with the same aspirations as the white suburban families have found a place in the suburbs. Their proportion to the total Negro population, however, is smaller than is the case for white families; even though they often have the means to buy better homes outside the heart of the city, they are unable to do so largely for reasons of racial prejudice. Thus more and more Negro families —poor and better off—have been squeezed together in central city ghettoes irrespective of the wide social distance between them.[5] More and more in the use of such public facilities as parks, hospitals, schools, etc., their geographical separation has led to *de facto* segregation of increasing intensity. One glaring exampl of this is Washington, D.C., where effective racial exclusion of Negroes from the suburbs has resulted in a city school system with a school population 83 percent Negro.

Family Characteristics

In the city the Negro family is retaining many of the primary group characteristics of rural families. Nonwhite households contained a larger proportion of children in 1960 than white households. The Negro households had more than three times as many grandchildren living with grandparents as white households in 1950; by 1960 this proportion had become five times as large. Although the percentage of lodgers in nonwhite households was sharply reduced in the 1950's, it was still twice as large in 1960 as that in white households.

Nonwhite women who married averaged more children per woman than white women of the same status, but the amount of the difference was affected by the large number of children born, the proportion of nonwhite

[5] U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, op. cit., p. 3. This report goes on to state, "As the examination into the housing condition of the nonwhites will demonstrate, the failure of many nonwhite families to move into suburban communities was not necessarily due to a preference for the central city environment. Rather it reflected a lack of housing available to them in most suburban areas."

women with five or more children being much larger than that of white women.

During the 1950's the marriage rate for nonwhites also showed a reverse pattern to that of the white population, with an increase in the percentage single, and a decrease in the percentage married, for the decade.

Nonwhite women become widows at an earlier age than white women. About 20 percent of all nonwhite females between fourteen and thirty-five years of age, as compared with 6.9 percent of white females of the same age group, were widows in 1960.[6]

The nonwhite population has substantially higher percentages of divorced persons; in the proportion of those separated the percentage of nonwhite separated males is more than five times, and of females more than six times, that of the corresponding white population. These figures, however, do not give a complete picture of the greater tendency of nonwhite marriages to break up, because death contributes in considerable measure to the difference between whites and nonwhites in the number of broken family units.

Thus, while nonwhite families were slightly less than 10 percent of all families in 1960, they were only 8 percent of families with both husband and wife present in the home. They represented 21.0 percent of all families with a female head.[7] While one in eleven white families was headed by a female, one in five nonwhite families had a female head.

Educational Attainment

Gains have been made during the past two decades in reducing the educational gap between Negroes and whites. By 1962 the average white person twenty-five to twenty-nine years of age had completed 12.5 years of schooling compared with 11.2 years by the average nonwhite person. For nonwhite men this represented a gain of some four and one-half years of school since 1940; for whites the average gain was two years.[8] The narrowing of the educational gap can be attributed largely to the increased number of Negro youth who have enrolled in school.[9]

At the elementary school level, the differential has been markedly re-

[6] G. Franklin Edwards, "Marriage and Family Life Among Negroes." *The Journal of Negro Education Yearbook,* XXXII (Fall, 1963). Washington, D.C.: The Howard University Press.) p. 451.

[7] Edwards, *ibid.*

[8] Robert G. Goodwin, *America Is For Everybody* (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Security, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963).

[9] Cognizance should be taken of the observation that despite the increasing rate of educational attainment by Negroes, there continues to be significant variance in the quality of education obtained in various sections of the United States.

duced as practically all children of elementary school age were in school in 1961.[10] At the high school level, however, the percentage of nonwhites attending school was appreciably below that of white students.[11]

Proportionately fewer Negroes than whites go to college, although by 1960, approximately 40 percent of the nonwhite population had acquired some high school or college education, compared to 62 percent of the white population.[12] The number of Negro college graduates is rising at a faster rate than the overall increase in the total nonwhite population.

Educating any child in a central city environment always presents difficult school problems. These problems are usually more acute for the Negro child. Holsey observes that "One has only to listen to children's tragic expressions on how they feel about belonging to a discriminated against minority group to know the bitterness it engenders." Repeated blows to self-esteem unquestionably interfere with the ability to learn.[13]

As a consequence of barriers to learning, school dropouts have become a serious problem for Negro families.[14] As an example, Negroes constituted 20 percent of the 350,000 youth, sixteen to twenty-four years old, who left school between January and mid-October of 1961. Many of these failed to get jobs; and 80 percent of Negroes who did find employment were working in unskilled laboring or service jobs, compared with 45 percent of the employed white dropouts.[15]

As Holsey points out, the parents of such children frequently are emotionally and materially deprived. In speaking of Negro parents she states:

> Many of them . . . have sunk into despair because they are cut off from the mainstream of opportunity in our society. Many had their origins in a very

[10] Marion Hayes, "A Century of Change—Negroes in U.S. Economy 1860–1960." *Monthly Labor Review*, U.S. Department of Labor (December, 1962).

[11] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, *Current Population Reports, Population Characteristics*, Series P–20, No. 115 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 7, 1962).

[12] Goodwin, *op. cit.*

[13] Eleanor Holsey, "Culturally Deprived Children in Day-Care Programs." *Children*, 10, No. 5 (September–October, 1963). Dr. Carl F. Hansen, Superintendent of Schools, Washington, D.C., writes in the *Washington Post*, October 27, 1963: "In the cultural Siberia in which many Negro children live, they acquire too little that is educationally helpful before they come to school, and as a result teachers must supply many of the experiences and learnings which children should get as a matter of course in home and family life. The wonder is, then, that so many of the Negro children who have had so little in their homes have gained so much in school. . . ."

[14] Added difficulties which school dropouts will face are discussed in recent studies by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. See "Employment of High School Graduates and Dropouts in 1961." *Monthly Labor Review* (May, 1962), and "Out of School Youth" February 1963, Parts I and II reprinted from the *Monthly Labor Review* November and December, 1964 (Reprints 2448 and 2452).

[15] Goodwin, *op. cit.*

> different kind of life than the life they are faced with in the crowded core of a great metropolis . . . a few apparently do not care what happens to their children or get their satisfactions from victimizing them.[16]

Labor Force Participation

In the beginning of the Negro shift to the city the principal job opportunities open to them as well as the kinds of jobs they were prepared to hold down were unskilled and low paid. This pattern was similar to that experienced by European migrants to the United States at the turn of the century. But unlike the white European, the Negro families did not, for a complex of reasons, escape in large numbers from their occupational ghetto.

It was not until the World War II period and after that there developed wider occupational distribution in the employment patterns for Negroes. Despite the gradual movement of nonwhite workers into higher skilled and better paying jobs, great differentials still persist between them and white workers. Although professional and clerical occupations have provided a major source of both white and nonwhite employment growth since the mid-1950's, Negroes continue to be overrepresented in such occupations as domestic servants, laborers, and semiskilled operatives. Nonwhites are still seven times as likely as white workers to be employed as private household workers (including maids, babysitters, housekeepers, chauffeurs, laundresses). Less than 5 percent of nonwhites were employed as managers, officials, proprietors and sales workers in 1962, whereas the proportion of white workers in these occupations in 1962 was almost 20 percent.[17]

The educational lag of Negroes is clearly reflected in the types of occupations most common to the two races in 1960. The U.S. Department of Labor continues to report that educational and training specifications for jobs in today's labor market underscore the poor education, inadequate training and low skills of many Negro workers. The gap is steadily widening between Negro worker qualifications and hiring requirements, particularly in those occupations with a growing demand for workers.

Goodwin, for example, writes:

> Many Negro families are trapped in what can only be called a vicious circle: Job discrimination and lack of educational opportunity or educational quality limit their employment opportunities and result in low and unstable incomes. Low incomes, combined with discrimination, reduce attainable

[16] Holsey, *op. cit.*

[17] Matthew A. Kessler, "Economic Status of Nonwhite Workers 1955–62." *Monthly Labor Review,* Preprint No. 2419, U.S. Department of Labor, July, 1963.

> levels of health and skills, and thus limit occupational choice and income in the future. And limited job opportunities result in limited availability of education and apprenticeship training, thus completing the circle.[18]

In the urban population where approximately 23 percent of the white workers are in professional, technical, or management positions, roughly only 8 percent of the nonwhites are similarly employed. Among the skilled craftsmen the ratio of whites employed—14 percent—is double that for nonwhites, 7 percent.

In addition, nonwhite workers of both sexes are less frequently employed at full-time jobs than white workers, are about twice as likely as whites to have reduced workweeks, and about five times as likely as the white worker to face under-employment.[19] Related to this is the fact that Negroes also tend to have a somewhat larger number of wage earners per family unit and higher rates of labor force participation than whites. Reflecting the heavy concentration of Negro women in household service occupations, about 30 percent of the nonwhite married women in the labor force in March, 1960, were part-time workers, compared with only about 20 percent of white married women.

Nonwhite workers are subject also to more frequent periods of unemployment. About three of every ten nonwhite men who had been unemployed sometime during the year were subject to three periods or more of unemployment in 1961, compared with two of every ten white men who had some employment. Moreover, nonwhite workers spend a considerably longer period of time on layoff or looking for work between jobs.

Nonwhite married women are more likely to be in the work force than white married women, regardless of the presence and age of children or income of husband. Approximately two-fifths of all white women twenty-

[18] Goodwin, *op. cit.*

[19] Robert L. Stein and Jane L. Meredith, "Growth and Characteristics of the Part-Time Work Force, No. 10." *Monthly Labor Review*, Reprint No. 2356, U.S. Department of Labor (November, 1960). Margaret L. Plunkett observes that "The proportion of Negro men with some college education who work in comparatively low-paying service and laborer jobs is almost five times greater than for whites. Among the least educated (no high school) 34 percent of nonwhite men work as nonfarm laborers compared with only 10 percent of whites with a similar educational level.

"The same general situation applied to Negro women who work. Ten percent of Negro women who have gone to college work as domestics compared with about one percent of other college women. About 44 percent of white women who have attended high school become office workers of various kinds compared with only 12 percent of nonwhite women. Almost two-thirds of the Negro high school group work as domestics or in other types of service jobs as against only 17 percent in the comparably educated white group." See U.S. Senate, 86th Congress, 2nd session, Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, *Studies in Unemployment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 89.

five to sixty-four were in the labor force in 1962, compared with nearly three-fifths of nonwhite women of the same ages.[20]

Nonwhite boys and girls fourteen to nineteen years of age evidence one of the highest jobless rates of any age-color group. In 1962 the unemployment rate of nonwhite teenagers remained near 25 percent, compared with about 12 percent for white youth. Since 1955, the jobless rate of nonwhite teenagers has increased faster than that of white youngsters—up to about 60 percent among nonwhites compared with a 30 percent rise for white youth.

Income

The nature of the labor force participation of Negro family members has a direct bearing on income. The great disparity in income distribution between Negroes and whites is indicated in the following table.[21]

TABLE I—Relative Income Groups: Nonwhite—White

Income	Percent families	
	Nonwhite	White
Less than $4,000	60	26
$6,000–$14,999	19	47
More than $15,000	1	5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports, Consumer Income*, Series P–60, No. 41, October 21, 1963. See especially Tables 1 and 16.

Housing

Negro families are concentrated in the low rent areas of the larger cities and housing is one of the most critical aspects of the socio-economic status of Negro families. More than any other variable it symbolizes for many Negroes their "have-not" status.

[20] Kessler, *op. cit.* John Hope states that "Although a greater share of nonwhite girls are participants at ages 14, 15, and 16 than are white girls, at ages 17 to 23 a larger proportion of white girls is in the labor force. This may be explained by the fact that white girls have more job opportunities at these ages, and because nonwhite girls marry earlier than white girls. At age 20 the rate for white women decreased while that of nonwhite women continued to rise, reaching a maximum of 48 to 49 percent at ages 35 to 44 years." See U.S. Senate, 86th Congress, 2nd session, Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, *Studies in Unemployment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 175.

[21] The relatively low nonwhite median income in 1962 reflects in part the fact that

Out of the 3.7 million nonwhite families who moved between 1950 and 1960, only 23 percent moved into units built during that decade. By contrast, out of 19 million white families, 58 percent moved into a house or apartment built between 1950 and 1960.[22]

Thus "Negro districts" commonly are in the slum areas adjacent to the central business and older sections of the city abandoned by the white population. This concentration of Negro families in central cities reflects not only economic necessity but also the lack of open occupancy in new suburban housing.

Crowding

Within urban areas nonwhite households have an average of 3.63 persons versus 3.13 for white households. The HHFA data indicate that (with some variations) between 1950 and 1960 a better matching of nonwhite families with housing units gave more of them increased space by 1960. Yet, the number of overcrowded units among nonwhite families increased by more than a quarter over the decade from nearly one million in 1950 to 1.3 million in 1960, while the number of overcrowded white families decreased by almost a quarter or about 0.2 million.

The contrast between white and nonwhite families is sharper in reference to seriously overcrowded units; among nonwhites these decreased from 18 to 13 percent, but among whites they fell from 4.3 to 2.4 percent.

While the rents paid by nonwhite tenants and the value of homes owned by nonwhites more than doubled between 1950 and 1960, they were still far below comparable figures for housing occupied by white families. The lower level of rents and values reflects the poorer quality of much of the housing available to Negro families. Because of limitations in the availability of housing, the rents and values of units occupied by Negroes often run well above the costs at which houses of comparable quality can be obtained by white families. Although Negroes have improved their home ownership position, increasing from 35 percent in 1950 to 38 percent in 1960, the improvement was not as great as that of white householders where the proportion of owners increased from 57 to 64 percent.

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about one-half of nonwhite families still live in the South where average family income is relatively low for both the white and nonwhite populations. For regions outside the South, this ratio was about two-thirds in 1962, whereas for the South it was less than one-half.

[22] Unless otherwise noted, the data on housing are from U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) materials, *op. cit.*

Mortality[23]

Since the turn of the century the mortality rate among nonwhites has been reduced more than half; but compared with mortality rates of the total population, those of the nonwhites continue to be excessive at nearly all age levels. In 1960 mortality rates of the nonwhites were 1.5 or more times as high as those of the total population during early childhood and the period twenty to sixty-four years of age. The Negro infant mortality rate in 1960 exceeded that in the total population by 66 percent (compared with an excess of 52 percent in 1950.)[24]

Today both Negroes and whites may expect to live longer than in previous years. Since 1900, life expectancy has increased by more than twenty years for the total population and by about thirty years for nonwhites.[25] In 1960 the average expectation of life at birth in the United States was 63.6 years for the nonwhite group and 69.7 years for the total population, a difference of 6.1 years, in contrast to a differential of 7.4 years in 1950. The recent increase in the proportion to the total population is due to the drop in the Negro death rate as well as the increasing birth rate. Hayes[26] indicates that much of this is due to improved health measures, particularly those that led to the near eradication of tuberculosis and typhoid, and to large reductions in the deaths of mothers and children. A major cause of the continuing disparity in health between nonwhites and the rest of the population is the relatively low economic status of the nonwhite group.

Probably one-quarter of the Negro families continue to be subjected to marginal employment opportunities, accompanied by sporadic work experience and unemployment. With roughly half of the income of white families, the Negro family is placed in a severely disadvantaged competitive position for the attainment of the necessities of life.

Poverty and Dependency

A disproportionately large number of Negro families thus live at the poverty level. While Negroes constitute approximately 12 percent of the population, they comprise 22 percent of the poor families. A recent report describes the life of the urban poor:

[23] The data on mortality are derived mainly from Marcus S. Goldstein, "Longevity and Health Status of the Negro American." *Journal of Negro Education* (Washington, D.C. Howard University Press, Fall, 1963), pp. 337–48.

[24] For 1960 U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare *Trends*, 1963, p. 27, indicate that the infant mortality rate was 40.7 for nonwhites, and 22.4 for whites.

[25] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Trends, op. cit.*

[26] Hayes, *op. cit.*

> There are poor people in Washington who get water by carrying a bucketful from a gas station, who obtain light by running extension cords across an alley to a neighbor's home, who live like rats in enclosures under porches. . . . In the heart of the city, some of the poor try to make a living by "picking"—picking up discarded papers and bottles to be sold to the junkman, picking over gutter debris to see if last night's drunk lost any coins, picking at the slots of vending machines for a stray dime.[27]

As compared with whites, some of the evidences of the poverty status of Negro families are their generally higher dependence upon public maintenance programs and disproportionate numbers of children born out of wedlock. Walker observes that "faulty parent-child relationships, instability of parents and a harmful social environment, crowded living conditions, inadequacy of food and clothing, lack of supervised recreational facilities, racial hostility, and segregation are all factors provocative of illegitimacy." [28] Available data appear to support these observations.[29] For example, in 1961 22 percent of all nonwhite babies were born out of wedlock as compared with 2.5 percent of all white babies, and 62 percent of all illegitimate births were nonwhite.

For both mothers and children the problems of illegitimacy and poverty are compounded by the fact that two out of five mothers of babies born out of wedlock are under twenty years of age, and about 2 percent are under fifteen years.

Aid to Families with Dependent Children [30]

In 1961 the Bureau of Family Services, in cooperation with state public welfare agencies, studied the characteristics and financial circumstances of

[27] Eve Edstrom, "They're All Scufflin'—Like Me," *Washington Post*, January 12, 1964.

[28] I. Walker, and Eugenia Sullivan, *New Directions in Health, Education, and Welfare*, 1st edition, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1963, p. 46.

[29] Helen E. Martz, "Illegitimacy and Dependency," *Indicators*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Reprint, September, 1963. Mrs. Martz indicates that, taken alone, these facts can be misleading. For example, since 1956, the annual rate of increase of white illegitimate babies has been greater than for nonwhite illegitimate babies. In 1961, an estimated 8,600 more white babies than in 1960 were born out of wedlock as compared to 7,300 more nonwhite babies. The 1960–61 nonwhite increase was 5 percent whereas the white increase was twice as great—over 10 percent. Also, there is a disproportionate number of nonwhites in the lower social and economic groups, where most reported illegitimacies occur. Another misleading factor may be that middle-class white women can get abortions done more readily under secret and safe circumstances.

[30] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Welfare Administration, Bureau of Family Services, *Dependent Children and their Families.* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963.)

the 910,000 families then receiving Aid for Dependent Children. It found that most of the dependent families have limited educational opportunity, lack skills needed for available work and live in crowded housing. Often they have been cut off by poverty and discrimination from constructive influences and community life.

Among all white children, 23 of each 1,000, and among all nonwhite children, 136 of each 1,000, needed AFDC at the time of the study.

The AFDC payments made up the largest part of the income of most dependent families, and more than half of the families (55 percent) had no income from any other source. These families had an average income of roughly 408 dollars a year per person, which was less than one-fourth of the national per person income at the time.

In one-third of the families there were four or more children. Three-fourths of the AFDC homes were fatherless. Fathers were away from the home in two-thirds of the cases. The fathers were dead in 7.7 percent of the cases. Nearly one-fifth of the families were in need because fathers were disabled. In another one-fifth, parents were not married. Separation, divorce and desertion, therefore, figure in approximately two-fifths of the families.

Few AFDC fathers had held, or were able to hold, jobs with high status or income. Only 3 percent had white collar employment experience, compared with almost 35 percent in this category among all employed males. Only 7 percent had worked in industry in such jobs as craftsmen or foremen, compared with 20 percent of all working men. About 34 percent were unskilled laborers, compared with 7 percent of all employed males. Some 3 percent of AFDC fathers had never held any full-time job. Thus, disability and low level of education go hand in hand with unemployment and dependency. Two large groups of AFDC fathers are to be found living in the home with the children—the incapacitated and the unemployed.

In the central cities, 63 of every 1,000 children under eighteen received AFDC. Almost 70 percent of all the assisted families lived in rented quarters, and 51 percent were crowded; the crowding was serious for almost half of these.

Old Age Assistance

A study of old-age benefit recipients in 1958 showed that 45 out of every 100 nonwhite aged persons in the United States received old-age assistance as compared to 17 out of every 100 white aged persons. The lower rate of insurance beneficiaries among the nonwhites is an important reason for the higher old-age assistance recipient rates. Nonwhites are more likely

than whites to reach age 65 without sufficient income or savings, and must rely to a greater degree on public assistance payments.[31]

How the Poor Negro Family Sees Itself [32]

Low income, poor housing, lack of education, broken homes, and discrimination and segregation all affect the Negro adversely. The central problem—to which all others are related—is that of racial discrimination, which, psychologically, produces a self-image of low self-esteem as a result of the behavior and attitudes of whites toward him from childhood and its consequences for certain aspects of the Negro's ability to live at ease with his white fellowman. Among many Negro families this low self-esteem apparently often displays itself in numerous apathetic reactions and the search for the material pleasures of the day without regard for the future.

The Negro family suffers also, especially the lower-class family, from early death, abandonment or divorce, as well as discrimination. Children are the prime target of such social disorganization, and their intrafamily relationships are warped. Sibling rivalry mounts with increasing material scarcity. Youngsters are "farmed out" to relatives for custody because of a broken home. The parent or "relative" is a member of a despised and discriminated-against group, and the child cannot identify with his parents because such identification carries with it a guarantee of external and reflected hatred.[33] The broken home often makes the mother the object and the children the victims of dependency. Therefore, the male child

[31] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Social Security Administration, *Social Security Program Statistics Relating to Nonwhite Families and Children*, Note No. 29 (September 8, 1958).

[32] For an excellent discussion of the psychodynamics of the Negro personality see Abram Kardiner, and Lionel Ovesey, *The Mark of Oppression: A Psychosocial Study of the American Negro* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.), 1951.

[33] Claire Hancock states that, "The more frequent and less pathological forms of exploitation also adversely affect children. Children may be overworked, or expected to take unreasonable responsibility for household tasks and care of younger children. Children who are kept out of school or denied time for normal school recreational activities are deprived of important opportunities for intellectual and social development. It is important to recognize the difficult task faced by parents who must live in slum areas where children are exposed to many dangers. Overcrowded households force children into the streets and sometimes into places where they may become victims of juvenile delinquency or adult degradation. . . . In some isolated rural areas, there are groups who are so withdrawn from contact with the larger community that inbreeding and deteriorated family and social life may result." (*Children and Neglect*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1963).

either has no father image or model to look to or otherwise sees this model condemned.

Lacking status in the social community, the Negro parent is inclined to overwhelming dominance within the family. If the mother should be alone to head the family, her need to make a living leaves her little time to indulge the children. In the eyes of the children she thus frequently becomes someone ambivalently to fear and to rely upon.

If the broken home is the setting, there are apt to be few useful and positive parental models with consequent injury to family life. As a result, the tough competitive and segregated world provides the main source of satisfactions and values. The mores of the street often make school attendance quite irrelevant and crime the desired path to success.

As child or adult, the Negro often cannot identify. If parents are the model, they are either not at home or are discredited and vilified by the white world. If whites are the ideal, acceptance often results in self-hatred, frustration and unrealistic goals.

The so-called white ideal is particularly oppressive to the middle and upper class Negro family where ambition is heightened, marriage is more stable, material comforts have been acquired and time and energy are available to be conventional and respectable. But white idealization must be linked with segregation and discrimination.

These Negro individuals and families are caught in the middle of the ladder of life. They will not move down to lower-class Negro standards, but they are blocked from moving up to the white ideal.

Historically, two sets of factors have affected the Negro urban family. One relates to the circumstances of migration; the other, to the continuing handicaps of the Negro group.

In emigrating, Negro families have had to give up old patterns of behavior and leave old associates behind. In their new environment they had to learn new ways of doing things. Problems had to be faced in breaking through limited and marginal employment, in upgrading low educational levels and in overcoming various forms of personal and social maladjustment.

Old and unproductive family members often became a burden in the cramped tenement houses of the city, in contrast with a more viable status in the more kinship-oriented environment of rural areas.

Vice, crime and asocial behavior are much more in evidence in the big cities than in the rural places. Births out of wedlock, for example, are more likely to become apparent in urban areas.

Thus, Negro families have had experiences typical of a folk or peasant people adjusting to an urban way of life. Historically, the cities have provided the loci for integrating immigrants into the American culture.

The experience has proved to be one in which each immigrant group has improved its socioeconomic status. A similar rise in social and economic status, however, has not yet been achieved in the case of a majority of Negro families. This is also true of other minorities in the United States, notably the Puerto Ricans.[34]

The slowness of the rate of progress of Negroes in urban society is due in large degree to the special handicap of race imposed upon them by the majority group.

Despite an unfavorable social environment great "social distance" exists among Negro urban families. The overall urban experience of Negro families is not uniform. Among urban Negroes there are, at one extreme, families which are third-generation urban residents. At the other extreme, many have come to urban centers only within the last decade. The success achieved by Negro families in the cities thus is related to (a) length of urban residence, (b) the particular urban areas to which they migrated, (c) their educational levels, skills or other "equipment" for competition, and (d) their particular experience with racial discrimination.

For some Negro families the migration and adaptation to urban living have been successful. They have achieved relatively high income status, high levels of education, family integrity and solidarity, and economic security. For these families the cities have provided opportunities for them to achieve middle- and upper-class status. Some Negro families have been urbanized for a period of fifty years preceding the World War I exodus of rural migrants to urban areas. In Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and Detroit, for example, many of these older Negro residents have well-established neighborhoods, stable families and moderate to high income levels. In this group are physicians, bankers, lawyers and teachers. Many appear to have no rural antecedents.

Sutherland observed that a sizeable proportion of Negro families have "shared in the American dream." As he stated several years ago:

> Some Negro youth have been so completely surrounded by middle-class patterns that their expectation of achieving advanced degrees, high professional standing, and an income which will enable them to live as well as, or better than their parents is taken for granted.[35]

The majority of Negro families, however, have not yet made a successful transition to urban life. A disproportionately large number of these families

[34] For an extended discussion of racial comparisons between whites and nonwhites, of income, economic status, working wives, etc., see Herman P. Miller, *Rich Man, Poor Man* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964).

[35] Robert L. Sutherland, *Color, Class and Personality*, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.

are of low socio-economic status and live in the cities at the poverty level.[36] Therefore, as families and as individuals, they continue to show high rates of personal and social disorganization.

It is the accumulation and circular effects of disadvantages that accentuate the problems faced by the Negro family in the city. As one observer has stated:

> Some of the problems of the transplanted migrants are inevitable, for movement across centuries of experience can not occur painlessly within a few years. Some are associated directly with conditions of living in the initial areas of settlement. And some are associated with the barriers to mobility that lead to increasing density and more intense personal and social problems in areas of concentrated Negro settlement.[37]

Summary and Conclusion

In its development of a middle-class orientation, the Negro family is beginning to approximate the major trend affecting all American families in its movement toward urban centers. The urban location is producing an increasing dependence upon money income and is changing the older familial model of three generation groups (that is grandparents, parents and children living in one household), to two- and one-generation groups. As a consequence, numerous intrafamilial expectations are changing.

Brimmer has observed that while the overall pattern of expenditures by Negro families continues to be typical of that generally found among low-income groups, there is also evidence of rapidly emerging middle-class spending habits. In 1960–61, the average urban Negro family spent about $3,707 for annual living expenses. This amount was just over two-thirds that spent by the average family in the Nation as a whole—a ratio which was virtually unchanged from 1950.[38]

[36] For an excellent analysis of the class structures within the Negro group, see John R. Rohrer and M. S. Edmonson, eds., articles by Harold Lief; Daniel Thompson; and William Thompson, *The Eighth Generation,* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960). There it is observed (p. 54) that "the social structure of the lower class is less organized, less stable, and less coordinated than that of the middle class. Its family life is predicated on unstable (frequently 'common law') marriage and frequent desertion. The mother is often the chief breadwinner, augmenting her own earnings with what she can wheedle or extort from her current husband, and the discipline exercised over the children is apt to be harsh and inconsistent, with both parents frequently out of the home."

[37] Irene B. Taeuber, "Migration, Mobility, and the Assimilation of the Negro." *Population Bulletin,* XIV, No. 7, U.S. Department of Commerce, (November, 1958), pp. 127–151.

[38] Andrew F. Brimmer, remarks before the 11th Annual Conference of the National Association of Market Developers. (Press release of May 15, 1964, U.S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.)

In many respects the Negro family has moved from one disadvantaged circumstance into another in its striving for urban status. The "core" and "gray" areas of the larger metropolitan areas most often are the locus of obsolescence and social and economic deterioration. The pattern of location of new "urbanites" has produced racial ghettoes. Concomitant with a general movement of the white population from these central portions of the city to suburban areas, the result most often has been a feeling on the part of the Negro population of at least psychological discrimination even when community efforts have been made to desegregate schools, or to undertake urban renewal programs, or to effect improved placement of groups. For example, even after efforts at desegregation, school populations have become resegregated. Churches, recreational areas and even business establishments have become largely identified with use by a particular group.

The recent shifting of Negro families to urban areas is related to the groups' growing protest movements. Negroes have become increasingly dissatisfied with their socio-economic status, and they point to housing restrictions, segregated education, discriminatory policies in trade unions and apprenticeship opportunities and other circumstances, as prohibitive of their achieving equal status. While the urban life of metropolitan areas appeared to have promised the Negroes greater freedom, the facts of everyday living are such that discrimination on the basis of race continues. Increased tension between Negroes and whites is the result.

Like the white family, the Negro family is beset with dynamic influences for which it is difficult to make adequate psychosocial preparation. Major social forces, such as the impact of automation on the labor force, the increasing reliance of society upon technically or professionally trained personnel and the continuing high levels of unemployment (even within a full economy) make it very difficult for families to prepare their members for the future.[39]

Today, however, the environment in which the urban Negro family lives contains numerous elements which result in "cultural deprivation" and social impoverishment; possibly half of the Negro youth live in such a situation.

Economic deprivation is conducive to cultural deprivation. The training ground for good citizenship, such as college education, adequate health protection, adequate recreation, reading, travel and involvement in community affairs, is not readily available to those at the bottom of the economic ladder.

It is difficult to assess the hopes and expectations of Negro youth, but

[39] See Margaret Mead, "The Changing American Family," *Children*, 10, No. 5 (September–October, 1963).

it is reasonable to assume that the lack of opportunity open to them in American society results in considerable frustration. Their level of opportunity is far below their potential for personal and social achievement.

As families and as individuals Negroes have become dissatisfied with their traditional status in the United States and they are participating in large-scale protest led in the main by the group's younger elements.

As examples:

The "sit-in" movement had its genesis in the Negro population of college age.

The hopes, plans and demands of the Negro population are being sharpened and lifted with the expectations that the rewards of American society will be forthcoming on a basis of racial equality.

The Negro family can now point to success models within the group in many walks of life.

The parental generation expects for its children opportunities much greater than any they might realize.

Thus, one consequence of urbanization appears to be an increasing sophistication and articulation on the part of Negro families; they are using techniques such as political participation, involvement in community organization and community processes and "movements" of various types to express their discontent and to effect widespread social change. The *Washington Post* reports:

> The Negro demands an end to housing shortages, limited job opportunities, the problems of slums. He sees symbols of discrimination everywhere—the all-white suburbs, his hand-me-down churches that whites have fled, the overcrowded and overaged schools that are now resegregated. . . . The Negro concedes the door to full equality is ajar. He demands that it open wide.[40]

The many trends affecting the American family generally, such as rising levels of health, increasing levels of educational attainment, improved occupational distribution, improved housing conditions and increased security through participation in public programs, are all having their beneficial effects on the Negro family. In part as a result of their determination to eliminate racial discrimination and achieve equality on all fronts, it is to be expected that in the future fewer and fewer distinctions may be drawn between the great mass of Negro families and those of the general population.

[40] Robert E. Baker, "Covert Segregation Galls D.C. Negroes," *Summer of Discontent*, VII, *Washington Post*, August 16, 1963.

TABLE II—"Balance Sheet" on Selected Aspects of Whites and Nonwhites

Item	White	Nonwhite
Population		
Size–growth–gains		
1960 total national	88.5%	11.5%
1940–50 gains	14.1%	17.1%
1950–60 gains	17.5%	26.7%
Outside the South		tripled since 1940
Migration		
From South	steady	marked
Rural to urban	steady	marked
To suburbia	major	minor
Concentration		
North Central cities	less	gain
Central or core city	out of	into
Family characteristics		
Units (household)		
Number households, 1960	47.9 million	5.2 million
Increase, 1960 over 1950	16.4%	21%
Living in urban areas, 1960	72%	77%
Marital Status		
Divorced males	2.1%	2.4%
Divorced females	2.7%	3.6%
Proportion separated males		over 5 × the whites
Proportion separated females		over 6 × the whites
Widows, ages 14–35	6.9%	20%
Total—separation, death, divorce		
Males	6.8%	15.7%
Females	16.7%	31.2%
Family Composition		
Size of household	3.23 persons	3.85 persons
Headed by male	9 of 10	3 of 4
Headed by female	1 of 11	1 of 5
Fertility		
Rate, 1961, age 15–44	112.3	153.8
Women not given birth	16.0%	21.3%
Proportion with 5–6 children		much larger than white
Proportion with 7 plus children		3 × the white
Babies born out of wedlock, 1961	2.5%	22.0%
Life expectancy, 1960	69.7 years	63.6 years
Mortality, 1960, early childhood and 20–64		1.5 × the white

TABLE II—continued

Item	White	Nonwhite
Housing		
Home ownership		
Moved into new suburban housing 1950–60	58% of 19 million	23% of 3.7 million
Increase in 1950's	57%–64%	35%–38%
Standardized units occupied in 1950's	68%–87%	25%–50%
Overcrowded units in 1950's	decreased 0.2 million	increased 0.3 million
Education		
Years of school completed, 1962, 25–29 age group	12.5 years	11.2 years
Gain since 1940 in school years completed	2 years	4.5 years
Elementary School enrollment, 1961	99.5%	98.2%
High School enrollment, 1956–61, increase for ages 14–17	89% to 92%	81% to 87%
Some College, total population	62%	40%
Labor Force participation		
White collar		
Increase, 1955–62	47%	17%
Managers, officials and proprietors, 1962	20%	5%
Service industries, 1960	8%	23%
Skilled		
Clerical, professional, technical and managerial	6%	20%
Professional and technical, 1962	12.5%	5%
Manufacturing, 1962	28%	18%
Professional, technical, managerial, 1960, urban	23%	8%
Unskilled and semiskilled		
Male, nonfarm	33%	75%
Females, proportion of		
Age 25–64, 1962	40%	58.5%
Part-time, married, 1960	20%	30%
All domestic and service, 1960	20%	60%
Income		
Median		
National, 1962	$6,200	$3,300
Males	$4,700	$2,300
Under $4,000, family	26%	60%

TABLE II—continued

Item	White	Nonwhite
$6,000–$14,900, family	47%	19%
$15,000– , family	5%	Less than 1%
Unemployment		
Age 25–44, 1962	3%	9%
Dropouts in unskilled and services	45%	80%
Teenagers, 1962	12%	25%
Teenagers, since 1955	up 30%	up 60%
Old Age assistance, recipients		
per 100 in all ages	17	45

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